A U M

The perfect Way is only difficult for those who pick and choose.—SENG TS'AN

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XLIV May, 1956 No. 7

THE LIFE OF H. P. BLAVATSKY

SEVERAL writers have attempted to compose biographies of H. P. Blavatsky. Some of these works have been little more than bare-faced attacks, some have been written with no better purpose than an eye to making money out of supposedly "sensational" material, and at least one was written by a sincere admirer of H.P.B.

No biography of H.P.B., however, can be called "successful." It might even be said that a creditable biography of H.P.B. cannot be written—or, if written, could not be understood by many more than the writer himself, since a geniune comprehension of H. P. Blavatsky would have to include a comprehension of her work, and the latter is a task that would require the effort of not only years, but lifetimes. It is better, therefore, not to attempt any such work as publication of a "life" of H.P.B.

Ordinarily, biography makes fruitful reading. A good biography is always a rewarding study of the excellences of human beings. It is usually a study of courage and resourcefulness, and sometimes of greatness and heroic devotion to high purposes. A great life is like a great work of art. Such biography, however, deals with a comprehensible if extraordinary scale of achievement. When we come to one such as H.P.B., we contemplate another level of life altogether, of which we can understand only fragments and bits, however well the "facts" are joined in sequence by the author, and however "sympathetic" his intent. It is better by far to study H.P.B. in Theosophy, than to hope to arrive at an understanding of either by reference to the personal history of H.P.B.

Take the question of an occultist's understanding of human nature. In one sense, H.P.B. entered into many personal relationships, in that she was closely associated with several people as a result of the work she set out to do. In another sense, she had *no* personal relationships. She spoke, we know, of Judge as having been part of herself for æons past. What is this, if not "personal"? First of all, it was a friendship and companionship which grew out of working together for a common cause. But for a long, long time in the egoic histories of both these individuals, there could have been no personal misunderstandings, no frictions or "problems" to work out. It was not a personal relationship in the familiar meaning of this term. Yet there were no doubt joys and enduring happiness for both from the association.

We can speak of these things "in the abstract," yet to grasp them with a sense of reality is more than difficult. The personal lives of people without personal motives must always remain a mystery to the personal man—a matter of the simplicity for which he may long, but which forever remains hidden until the transition from Arjuna to Krishna has actually taken place.

Then there is the matter of "sophistication." H.P.B. doubtless seemed at times "unsophisticated" to urbane Englishmen like Sinnett and Hume. Their worldly wisdom was no part of her nature. She was entirely capable of being unsuspicious, yet without being either gullible or indifferent to the weaknesses and latent treacheries in those about her. She knew, perhaps, so much about human nature in general that she was not obliged to study its manifestations in particular, unless a particular reason for doing so presented itself. She would not anticipate evil of anyone, for by that expectation she might have swung the balance of decision in the wrong direction. She left everyone *entirely free.*

So, from the viewpoint of the world, she may have seemed unprepared, or even "impractical." It is better, however, to think of her as one who knew just about what could be expected of human nature—European and American human nature—in the middle of the fourth round, during the rising cycle of the fifth race, and was content to work along without too close inspection of the failures and betrayals that were on the way.

She worked in the light of the perspectives of centuries and millennia. She could no doubt have appeared to everyone as the Wise Woman of the ages. This would have helped no one. H.P.B. came as a *teacher,*

and that is how she worked, caring nothing for what people thought, except as it might affect how they would learn.

There can be no knowing of H.P.B. except through acquirement of the vision which she enjoyed. To say that she was more a "force" than a person, more an embodied "intelligence" than an ordinary human being, may seem to subtract from her humanity, as, indeed, it does, if we have little but physical meaning for the word "force," and only an intellectual notion of the scope of "intelligence." Our heritage, alas, is one of little meanings and weak abstractions, so that the very terms we need to characterize a truly great being enfeeble what we try to say.

Yet the rich life of the mind and the heart, to which all devotees aspire, is an impersonal life of committed energies. It is no more colorless than the life of the great artist, the great poet, is colorless. It is the being of full humanity, from which we are debarred by standards of judgment which do not belong to the soul at all, but to the fears, vanities, and tiresome conventionalities of our time.

A man who can give himself completely to a worthy purpose—without regret, without looking back—he can understand a little of H.P.B. A man who, even in personal faltering and weakness, can feel the mood of strength which will some day be his, and know in his heart that this is what he wants—he can understand a little of H.P.B. A man who at last discovers that the habit of judging others is useless, wasteful, and delusive—even after all the petty qualifications and cautionary utterances have been heard—he can understand a little of H.P.B.

It is possible to find all of one's pleasure in the awakenings of others —to reach a point where personal amusements and objectives seem pointless and unnatural. And then, in this feeling of freedom, in this turning of involvements into a series of irrelevant shadows, may be found the substance of the meaning of H.P.B.

We may think of growth in this direction as long; but we need not think of it as "hard." To begin to live and move in the atmosphere of true egoity—this is the freedom of the soul, and it is not hard to appreciate.

"THE DWELLER ON THE THRESHOLD"

[The following article, a condensation of a talk by Robert Crosbie, was printed in THEOSOPHY for February, 1921. The subject of the "Dweller on the Threshold"—Bulwer Lytton's phrase seems to linger on, as though this intuitive author had caught the spirit of a disciple's times of trial—here receives treatment which frightens no one, but *enlightens* considerably. Any man of honest introspection can, upon reading what is to follow, realize that he has encountered such forces as those spoken of, and will do so again. The knowledge that this is so must inevitably be a part of the "facing up" to psychological reality which marks the courage of the devotee.

Mr. Judge's short comments, which follow, may well have inspired the broader usage to which Mr. Crosbie puts the concept of the "Dweller."—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

WHAT may seem a very fanciful phrase to many—"the Dweller on the Threshold"—was used by Bulwer Lytton in his story of "Zanoni" to illustrate something which comes about in the life of every student who passes beyond the merely physical. The incident pictures an old Sage—not quite such an one as our Theosophical studies might lead us to imagine—who is Glyndon's, the hero's, teacher. Being about to start on a journey, he points to two vases which are left in the room and warns Glyndon not to open them, else certain consequences will be sure to follow. Glyndon, however, in finding himself alone gives way to his curiosity and opens the two vases. At first, he was filled with an intoxicating perfume that seemed to exhilarate and give him the feeling of greatest joyousness. After a while, this passed, and he began to see various forms, now vaguely and indistinctly, then more and more clearly, until each form seemed to take on a very threatening appearance, and all finally coalesced into one form which threatened him with injury and filled him with horror. This form was called the Dweller on the Threshold.

Now, let us understand each human being to be the center of a circle, that circle containing a record of every experience through which we have passed and all knowledge heretofore gained,—a circle which defines our beginning and our progress. If we couple with this the idea that each life adds to the store of knowledge, and that each kind of knowledge, selfish or unselfish, is kept—or keeps—by itself, we can see that within the circle there are, so to speak, zones, each one of these

zones containing a particular kind of consciousness and composed of a particular kind of substance. These zones are at least seven in number. If, then, we are in the middle of all these zones, each one that surrounds us keeps us from the highest, the most perfect, the most spiritual zone of our nature; and, if we are to pass forward, even one step beyond the mere physical, we must go through that zone which is just beyond the physical, and in which the more evil, selfish elements of our nature and experience exist. We have to break into and pass through that zone in order to get to the higher zones of our being, but the only way we can break through it is by arousing it to action, by *meeting it and transforming it.* No being whatever, however good his ordinary expression of nature may be, but must pass through that zone. A good man, going on a journey, has to take the path in the direction of his goal, no matter what the condition of that path. It may be muddy, but he must go through it.

So, with the student, as soon as he forms a great desire to go forward, and to understand himself—his powerful motive being to obtain all power, all possessions, that he may be the better able to help his fellowmen. At first, as he pushes on, he is very joyful in having found a solution to all the problems of life. Everything seems fair and pleasant, now; difficulties are not in his way; physical disabilities are patiently borne; he sees that all is not so bad as he would have thought. Then, he pushes a little farther forward, and he finds other things; he finds certain forces surrounding him, generated by himself, and beginning to awaken. For there are with every one of us dormant senses and dormant experiences which the present conditions of life and prevailing ideas of the time do not give the chance to operate. The moment our thoughts and mind are turned in a higher direction, however, the prevailing ideas begin to lose their force, and, with all our attention centered in another direction, the dormant senses and powers, as well as experiences, begin to make themselves felt. These influences, so strange to us, are sometimes discouraging; we do not know to what to refer them; but as we push on and on, they begin to take shape. For every experience has a form, else it could not remain as such, and we arouse its forces into action and give them life by directing our attention to them. The shape, into which the various forms seen by the earnest student finally coalesce, varies with the student, as it follows the line of his family and of his likes—particularly, that of his dislikes. It may take the same shape each time with one student, or with another it may

change each time. The form symbolizes whatever there is in our past Karma which is unbalanced. It has to be met; and, not only that, but as our own past Karma has to do with the collective Karma of the races through which we have come—more particularly of the race in which we now are—we not only arouse the individual, segregated Dwellers of our own zone, but everything analogous to them in our race or people. We have to meet our own ghosts as well as the ghosts of our people, and in conquering the denizens of our own outward zones, we help to raise up the whole Karma of the race to which we belong.

Theosophy teaches that man is a spiritual being, not physical at all; that the body itself is but a physical *instrument* drawn from the earth by the power of the indwelling man; that the mind is merely ideas held in regard to life, but the Spirit of man, the Knower, the Experiencer, is alone the true individual. That individual became an individual before this earth, or this solar system, was, and he has, with the changing in matter, worked through the various condensations of substance down to the present plane. On each plane of substance he has acquired a consciousness and a set of senses and a body of that substance, all these acquired bodies, and all these planes of consciousness being continually with him, re-acting upon him in the body as he acts upon them. Each physical life comprises but a very small portion of all the vast reservoir of experiences of the past, which as we push forward we help to re-open very hurriedly.

There is an aphorism which says that Karma may be retarded by certain actions, and that it may also be hastened; that it is hastened by the power of a vow. So, when the individual pledges himself to go forward, to reach further and further into his true spiritual nature, he brings Karma to pass which would not come, perhaps, for many lives in the ordinary course; he awakens *all* the denizens about him—elemental forces, tendencies, germs—which are awaiting their fruition. By bringing them into operation, by bringing new powers into action, he meets his Karma more hastily; he sets loose a very real force. So, the "Dweller on the Threshold" is a very real thing, and something which we all must meet, whether we begin now or wait for a thousand incarnations. We cannot do other than pass that way—over the threshold of the accumulated evil of the past. For it is absolutely impossible for any man to escape his Karma. Each within his own sphere he dwells. Around him are all those effects produced by himself in past ages, as well as in the present, and until he breaks through that evil with which he has sur-

rounded himself, he can never have that power which belongs to sages and to saviors; the strength and power of his motives must be tested thoroughly before he can emerge into the higher zones of his being.

Now, there came into the world in this very generation the great philosophy of Theosophy, brought and given by those who *knew* it. As soon as those to whom it was given began to study, to try to force themselves along the path trodden by all sages, the Dweller on the threshold of the time was awakened. Many, many have been the failures in the name of Theosophy. The great science has been mutilated in thousands of ways, so that the general public does not know that there is an exact record left by Those who brought it. That knowledge exists; the way to obtain the activity of the inner nature is right before us; the doors are never closed to anyone; but, no one other than ourselves, however powerful, can ever arouse the necessary action from within to take the step. Each one must see the necessity for the step; each step must be seen to *be* the step by the one who takes it. The divine spark within the human breast desires space in which to burn. It can not be cramped, or constrained. But we do constrain it by thinking we are our physical bodies, by thinking we can be saved by the efforts of others, by laying our sins on others, by believing knowledge can be conferred upon us by others. These ideas are our dwellers, for they stand in the way of our getting a true perception. Enmeshed in action and reaction, we are unable to turn our minds in the true direction. The mission of Theosophy was to arouse the real man from this sleep of ages,—a sleep in which he dreams, acting with the powers of his own nature and creating shape after shape; some dreams—nightmares, and none leading to the real goal. Not until the divine spark within us has struck fire from the light of other lights who have passed beyond our stages will we take the true step out of what is for so many the vale of misery and death.

Our Dweller is about us all the time. Everything which conflicts with good is an operation of that dweller. Everything which prevents us from taking those steps which we can see would be the better ones for us to take is a dweller. We have about us on every hand influences from our fellow men which make it most difficult for us to take and keep that step which in our better moments seems the very best. Their thoughts and acts tend to re-inforce our Dweller. The greatest Dweller we have is doubt, suspicion, fear, lack of faith. These are outward exhibitions of the Dweller, and the first influences which we feel. These dwellers have to be conquered. We must have absolute faith; absolute

faith in our power to learn, and an unbounded confidence in that which is being taught us. For, if we are told that there is a science of life, a knowledge of all the laws of life, is there any pursuit more worth while than finding out whether the statement is a truth or lie? Surely, there is none. In a few years this small physical life will be gone. What will we have learned from it; how shall we have profited by it? Shall we overcome enough of the Dweller now to enable us to take the step with greater force in the future, or shall we drift and accumulate those forces which forever stand in our way until we take the step? The whole of humanity will be driven to it some day, if only after aeons and aeons of suffering from wrong courses taken.

A wide and wonderful field is open to every human being. All that he would like to know he may know. All that exist before him as mysteries can be cleared up. All powers that reside in nature, in every one of its departments, can be his; but, ONLY, when he sees that he is part of the great Whole; when he feels that never could he use a power of any kind for any personal selfish purpose, but would lay all his possessions at the feet of his fellow men, for *their* benefit; ONLY then, can the best and highest in him operate. Nothing selfish, nothing related to the mere body, or its preservation, or one's comfort, or the pursuits of one's own desires can ever open the doors; nothing but the determination to go forward, to become one of Nature's saviors, to work for the progress of all beings in the universe will open the doors. No creed will save us. No belief will save us; no mere being good from our own personal point of view; no reforming from this, that, or the other thing in order to be "saved." Nothing but a knowledge of our own natures and the determining to put that knowledge into active practical use for the benefit of others, not ourselves; ONLY that will kindle the flame that now burns so dimly while we are in the body.

The "Dweller on the Threshold" is with us. Shall we break away, break through that plane where he dwells? Can we be determined enough to go through all those trials that must be ours by our thought and action of the past, and all those which our fellow men have placed about us? Are we strong enough to take the step?

THE DWELLER OF THE THRESHOLD

HAS such a being any existence? Has any one ever seen it? Are there many or several, and has it any sex?

Such are the questions asked by nearly all students who read theosophical books. Some of those who all their life believed in fairies in secret and in the old tales of giants, have proceeded to test the question by calling upon the horrid shade to appear and freeze their blood with the awful eyes that Bulwer Lytton has made so famous in his "Zanoni." But the Dweller is not to be wooed in such a way, and has not appeared at all, but by absolute silence leads the invoker to at last scout the idea altogether.

But this same inquirer then studies theosophical books with diligence, and enters after a time on the attempt to find out his own inner nature. All this while the Dweller has waited, and, indeed, we may say, in complete ignorance as yet of the neophyte's existence. When the study has proceeded far enough to wake up long dormant senses and tendencies, the Dweller begins to feel that such a person as this student is at work. Certain influences are then felt, but not always with clearness, and at first never ascribed to the agency of what had long ago been relegated to the lumber-room of exploded superstitions. The study goes still farther and yet farther, until the awful Thing has revealed itself; and when that happens, it is not a superstition nor is it disbelieved. It can then never be gotten rid of, but will stay as a constant menace until it is triumphed over *and left behind.*

When Glyndon was left by Mejnour in the old castle in Italy, he found two vases which he had received directions not to open. But disobeying these he took out the stoppers, and at once the room was filled with intoxication, and soon the awful, loathsome creature appeared whose blazing eyes shone with malignant glare and penetrated to Glyndon's soul with a rush of horror such as he had never known.

In this story Lytton desired to show that the opening of the vases is like the approach of an enquirer to the secret recesses of his own nature. He opens the receptacles, and at first is full of joy and a sort of intoxication due to the new solutions offered for every problem in

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This article by Mr. Judge was first printed in the *Path* for December, 1888, and reprinted in THEOSOPHY for July, 1913.

life and to the dimly seen vistas of power and advancement that open before him. If the vases *are kept open long enough,* the Dweller of the Threshold surely appears, and no man is exempt from the sight. Goodness is not sufficient to prevent its appearance, because even the good man who finds a muddy place in the way to his destination must of necessity pass through it to reach the end.

We must ask next, WHAT is the Dweller? It is the combined evil influence that is the result of the wicked thoughts and acts of the age in which any one may live, and it assumes to each student a definite shape at each appearance, being always either of one sort or changing each time. So that with one it may be as Bulwer Lytton pictured it, or with another only a dread horror, or even of any other sort of shape. It is specialized for each student and given its form by the tendencies and natural physical and psychical combinations that belong to his family and nation.

Where, then, does it dwell? is the very natural inquiry which will follow. It dwells in its own plane, and that may be understood in this manner.

Around each person are planes or zones, beginning with spirit and running down to gross matter. These zones extend, within their lateral boundaries, all around the being. That is to say, if we figure ourselves as being in the centre of a sphere, we will find that there is no way of escaping or skipping any one zone, because it extends in every direction until we pass its lateral boundary.

When the student has at last gotten hold of a real aspiration and some glimmer of the blazing goal of truth where Masters stand, and has also aroused the determination to know and to be, the whole bent of his nature, day and night, is to reach out beyond the limitations that hitherto had fettered his soul. No sooner does he begin thus to step a little forward, than he reaches the zone just beyond mere bodily and mental sensations.

At first the minor dwellers of the threshold are aroused, and they in temptation, in bewilderment, in doubt or confusion, assail him. He only feels the effect, for they do not reveal themselves as shapes. But persistence in the work takes the inner man farther along, and with that progress comes a realization to the outer mind of the experiences met, until at last he has waked up the whole force of the evil power that naturally is arrayed against the good end he has set before him.

Then the Dweller takes what form it may. That it does take some definite shape or impress itself with palpable horror is a fact testified to by many students.

One of those related to me that he saw it as an enormous slug with evil eyes whose malignancy could not be described. As he retreated—that is, grew fearful—it seemed joyful and portentous, and when retreat was complete it was not. Then he fell further back in thought and action, having occasionally moments of determination to retrieve his lost ground. Whenever these came to him, the dreadful slug again appeared, only to leave him when he had given up again his aspirations. And he knew that he was only making the fight, if ever he should take it up again, all the harder.

Another says that he has seen the Dweller concentrated in the apparent form of a dark and sinister-looking man, whose slightest motions, whose merest glance, expressed the intention and ability to destroy the student's reason, and only the strongest effort of will and faith could dispel the evil influence. And the same student at other times has felt it as a vague, yet terrible, horror that seemed to enwrap him in its folds. Before this he has retreated for the time to prepare himself by strong self-study to be pure and brave for the next attack.

These things are not the same as the temptations of Saint Anthony. In his case he seems to have induced an hysterical erotic condition, in which the unvanquished secret thoughts of his own heart found visible appearance.

The Dweller of the Threshold is not the product of the brain, but is an influence found in a plane that is extraneous to the student, but in which his success or failure will be due to his own purity. It is not a thing to be dreaded by mere dilletante theosophists; and no earnest one who feels himself absolutely called to work persistently to the highest planes of development for the good of humanity, and not for his own, need fear aught that heaven or hell holds.

—Eusebio Urban

NOTES ON THE DHAMMAPADA

CANTO SIX of the *Dhammapada,* following Canto Five's interesting observations concerning various characteristics of "the fool," is entitled "The Wise Man." The "wise man," as we discovered last month, is to be recognized by his ability to detect a fool when he encounters one. However, the first two verses of Canto 6 are apt to be puzzling to students who, during the course of reading the preceding canto, have come to identify Buddha with the broadest of tolerance. For:

> If you see an intelligent man who detects faults and blames what is blameworthy, follow that wise man. Value him as a revealer of hidden treasure. He will be beloved of the good; by the bad he will be hated. Let such a man admonish, let him instruct, let him forbid what is improper.

Apparently Buddha considers it important to be able to "detect faults and blame what is blameworthy." While this discussion recalls the identification of the wise man as one who declines to associate himself with "fools," in this case his discrimination merely results in a gentle retreat from the wrong sort of companionship. But to "detect faults and blame"—especially openly or publicly, as Buddha clearly implies—is to take strong steps, to interfere, presumably, with the course of events, or at least with prevailing opinions.

However, we may note also that this "detecting of faults" is held to be of value because it *reveals hidden treasure.* Perhaps this is to say that we may not fully understand the qualities of the Good without seeing them in contrast to their opposites. Then, too, Buddha in no sense indicates that the wise man will "hate" exemplars of "blameworthiness." He may *himself* be hated by those whose faults are exposed, yet his purpose is not to punish, but only to "admonish" and "instruct."

H. P. Blavatsky's article, "Is Denunciation a Duty?" which appeared in *Lucifer* for December, 1888, embodies the essence of the Buddha's discourse in this regard, applying the basic precepts of Gautama to the turbulent days of the nineteenth century Theosophical Movement. Since *Lucifer,* as she admits, often took part in certain forms of "denunciation," H.P.B. feels obliged to answer those critics who claim a glaring discrepancy between the professed theosophic ideal of *non*-condemnation of others and the policy of H. P. Blavatsky's own magazine.

She writes as follows:

> We may be told, perhaps, that we ourselves are the first to break the ethical law we are upholding. That our theosophical periodicals are full of "denunciations," and LUCIFER lowers his torch to throw light on every evil, to the best of his ability. We reply—this is quite another thing. We denounce indignantly systems and organizations, evils, social and religious—*cant* above all: we abstain from denouncing persons. The latter are the children of their century, the victims of their environment and of the Spirit of the Age. To condemn and dishonor a man instead of pitying and trying to help him, because, being born in a community of lepers he is a leper himself, is like cursing a room because it is dark, instead of quietly lighting a candle to disperse the gloom. "Ill deeds are doubled with an evil word"; nor can a general evil be avoided or removed by doing evil oneself and choosing a scapegoat for the atonement of the sins of a whole community. Hence, we denounce these communities, not their units; we point out the rottenness of our boasted civilization, indicate the pernicious systems of education which lead to it, and show the fatal effects of these on the masses. Nor are we more partial to ourselves. Ready to lay down our life any day for THEOSOPHY—that great cause of the Universal Brotherhood for which we live and breathe—and willing to shield, if need be, every true theosophist with our own body, we yet denounce as openly and as virulently the distortion of the original lines upon which the Theosophical Society was primarily built, and the gradual loosening and undermining of the original system by the sophistry of many of its highest officers. We bear our Karma for our lack of humility during the early days of the Theosophical Society; for our favorite aphorism: "See, how these Christians love each other" has now to be paraphrased daily, and almost hourly, into: "Behold, how our Theosophists love each other." And we tremble at the thought that, unless many of our ways and customs, in the Theosophical Society at large, are amended or done away with, LUCIFER will one day have to expose many a blot on our own scutcheon—*e.g.*, worship of Self, uncharitableness, and sacrificing to one's personal vanity the welfare of other Theosophists—more "fiercely" than it has ever denounced the various shams and abuses of power in state Churches and Modern Society.

In William Q. Judge's *Letters That Have Helped Me* (page 22), we find a further definition of evil in terms of Buddhist philosophy. The aim in "opposing evil" is instruction, understanding—never to be accompanied by hate, nor even righteous anger. Buddha's "Wise Man" could easily absent himself entirely from scenes of human strife and discord. But he chooses instead to remain in the middle of that discord, *in the sense that he accepts what men call "evil,"* as well as what

the conventional majority call "good." Patience, not righteousness, indicates his mood.

Mr. Judge writes in this vein:

> To "turn away in horror" is *not* detachment. If we hate anything, it seizes on our inner selves by reason of the strong horror we feel for it. In order to prevent a thing we must understand it; we cannot understand while we fear or hate it. We are not to love vice, but are to recognize that it is a part of the whole, and, trying to understand it, we thus get above it. This is the "doctrine of opposites" spoken of in *Bhagavad-Gita.* So if we turn in horror from the bad (we may feel sad and charitable, though), in a future life we will feel that horror and develop it by reaction into a reincarnation in a body and place where we must in material life go through the very thing we now hate. So, we must strive to regard the greatest vice as being something we must not hate while we will not engage in it, and then we may approach that state where we will know the greater love that takes in good and evil men and things alike.

Returning to the first two verses of Canto 6—a whole essay, of course, could be written on what it means to "forbid" what is improper. Since Buddha did not sanction the use of force, nor condone the punishment of one man by another, the central meaning of *"forbid"* would have to be that of non-support or non-cooperation. Most of us, in our relationships with others, will, upon reflection, discover that we are subsidizing or supporting the activity of a number of persons. Our legitimate powers of "forbidding" allow us to announce the ethical impossibility of continuing to support whatever action we regard as detrimental. Another way to put this would be to say that the spirit of Gandhi's "passive resistance" becomes the force employed. *Satyagraha* means love of truth, and one who practices it opposes evil by refusing to support or associate with its doers—not because he hates *them,* but because he loves truth. "Forbidding," therefore, in Buddha's terms, means that one announces that he cannot sanction a certain course; it should be interesting to all students of history to note that the refusal of Buddhist priests to sanction warfare, no matter what the cause, had much to do with keeping Asia far freer of bloody strife than any other portion of the globe—at least over the course of many centuries.

Verse 8 restates a more familiar description of "The Wise Man." "Good people," affirms Buddha, "move onwards whatever befalls. They do not prattle, nor yearn for pleasures." Is there a better way, at once simple and profound, for describing a worthy man? "Prattling"

is an obvious symbol for consciousness dissipating itself through aimless expenditure of energy. Failing to apply oneself to the rigors of duty or to the challenge of difficult opportunities, the "prattler" wastes both time and psychic energy in an endeavor to create the *illusion* of motion. He "yearns for pleasure" to escape contemplation of his true tasks.

And so it is, as related in Verses 10 and 11, that "a few only reach the farther shore. Most people go their rounds on this one." "This shore" is clearly a realm of partial incarnation of man's energy of merely half-hearted dedication, and those who live on this familiar terrain are, therefore, both the producers and the victims of ceaseless confusion. For, while even "on this shore" there are moments of intuitive vision and times of comparatively high resolve, these suffer constant interruption until one crosses "over to the farther shore."

What, in analytical terms, are the chief characteristics of "this shore"? Another translation of the *Dhammapada* is suggestive on this point, remarking that "the multitude, who remain, run up and down the bank on this side." This is a good simile, for the chief difference between behavior on the two "shores" is that of the confusion on the one and the clarity on the other. "Viewing life and its probable object," to borrow one of William Q. Judge's phrases, recognition means that the greatest difficulty is what Patanjali calls "misconceptions of duties and responsibilities"—also, we may add, misconceptions of *opportunities*. And those who "run up and down the bank" fail to give thorough attention to anything they do. Leaving tasks partially completed, obligations cursorily discharged, affections less than fulfilled in purposive striving, they are constantly distracted.

Though it is possible for one man to live many lives during a single existence, in terms of discharging Karma, each one of these "lives," like each day of the year, must have full attention for its own fruition. The man who puts off until tomorrow what needs to be done today is the man who *fails to incarnate* sufficiently in the situations he encounters. So, from one point of view, it is "better"—because less confusing—to have no "love" unless that love be complete, to have no "patriotism" unless it is of a full and noble sort, to have no virtues if they are but partially attended. Actually, of course, evolution cannot work in terms of such clear beginnings and endings. Yet while we live "on this shore" we have half a love, half a patriotism, and, perhaps, a small

portion of each virtue. But on the "other shore" we know completeness —the full focusing of will and intelligence, which means the responsibility for incarnating with all of our faculties at one and the same time.

Turning to Verses 12 and 13, we find some recommendations familiar to those concerned with the path of asceticism:

> Let a man value retirement which is hard to love; let him leave the householder-state, seeking the homeless one. Let the wise abandon the way of darkness and follow the light on the path. Leaving behind all sense pleasures, calling nothing his own, let the wise man cleanse himself from all impurities of the heart and then enjoy.

Here, the distinctive Buddhist emphasis is also present—occurring in the last three words. While the "then enjoy" obviously cannot mean irresponsible indulgence as a reward for attainment, it does imply, as did the sentences in Canto 4 regarding "Flowers," that the Bhikkhu need not miss the flavor and savor of life's happiness. Restriction of the senses from untutored purposes is not conceived of as an end in itself, but a means to *tranquility.* Only the man who has learned to be "homeless" can understand or *even fully appreciate in a philosophical sense,* the meaning of the home. Professor E. A. Burtt's rendition of *The Dhammapada,* utilizing the Max Muller translation, is helpful on this point: The disciple is told that "after going from his home to a homeless state, he should in his retirement look for enjoyment where enjoyment seemed difficult." So, on this view, there is enjoyment still, on the farther shore, but enjoyment of and in those things where enjoyment first "seemed difficult." This, of course, is but an echo of another statement, familiar to theosophical students, regarding the way in which the path of duty can be finally seen to constitute the very "waters of life."

That a balanced perspective on asceticism was continued through many centuries by Buddhist philosophers, is shown by Hsi Yun, a Zen teacher who lived about 840 A.D.:

> If students of the Way desire to become Buddhas, they should only study how to avoid seeking for or clinging to anything. If nothing is sought, the mind will remain in its "unborn" state and, if nothing is clung to, the mind will not go through the process of destruction. That which is neither born nor destroyed is the Buddha.
>
> If the student of the Way wishes to understand the real mystery, he need only put out of his mind attachment to anything whatsoever.
>
> This spiritually enlightened nature is without beginning or end, as old as space, neither subject to birth nor destruction, neither exist-

ing nor not-existing, neither defiled nor pure, neither clamorous nor silent, neither old nor young, occupying no space, having neither inside nor outside, size nor form, colour nor sound. It cannot be looked for or sought, comprehended by wisdom or knowledge, explained in words, contacted materially or reached by meritorious achievement. . . .

This pure mind, the source of everything, shines on all with the brilliance of its own perfection, but the people of the world do not awake to it, regarding only that which sees, hears, feels, and knows as mind. Because their understanding is veiled by their own sight, hearing, feeling, and knowledge, they do not perceive the spiritual brilliance of the original substance.

Light Beyond Darkness

Ananda addressed Buddha, saying: "World-honored! if this sight-power is the same as my mysterious nature, then this nature of mine ought to be clear to me; and if this sight-power is the same as my true nature, then what is my mind, so-called, and what my body?"

Buddha replied: "Suppose, then, that in the exercise of this mysterious and excellently glorious vision, you are observing things around you, tell me in what does the 'self' of this power consist—is it due to the bright light of the sun? or is it attributable to the presence of darkness? is it the existence of space which constitutes the groundwork of this 'self'? or is it the presence of obstacles that constitutes this self? Ananda! if the bright presence of light is the groundwork, then, as this presence is the substantial basis of vision, what can be the meaning of seeing 'darkness'? If space is the basis of this 'self-caused' power, then, how can there be such a thing as an interruption of sight by any obstacle? or, if any of the various accidents of darkness be considered as the substantial basis of the 'self', then, in the daylight the power of seeing light ought to disappear. . . .

"Therefore, Ananda! you ought to know that when you see the light, the seeing does not depend on the light; when you see the darkness, the seeing does not depend on the darkness."

—Surangama Sutra

THE GUILT COMPLEX

Kill in thyself all memory of past experiences. Look not behind or thou art lost. —*The Voice of the Silence*

EVER since the first quarter of the present century there has been a rapidly growing interest in psychology. This has led some to suppose that the subject is entirely new, and that before the time of Freud or Jung, no such thing as "mental blocks," or "complexes," or "neuroses" ever so much as cast a shadow upon human reflection. It is true that a completely new nomenclature has been invented to designate feelings and emotions which produce definite effects upon the body. But the feelings and emotions are obviously not new. Did electricity come into being only when Ben Franklin sent his kite flying high into the air? Did recently discovered stars and galaxies have their birth only when the lenses of powerful telescopes focused their rays of light for the first time? Even superficial acquaintance with the religious and philosophical literature of the ancients will convince any open-minded inquirer that psychology is as old as man, and that mental and emotional phenomena have been essentially the same in all ages. That Western investigators are now attempting to develop their psychological findings into a science, is due to the fact that the present age is one of transition toward philosophical enlightenment, and that mankind is emerging from a dark period in the history of mind.

This widespread interest in the subject of psychology serves to confirm the theosophical teaching that psychic unfoldment is an inevitable adjunct of the present cycle, and that the principle of *Manas* is also awakening. As racial evolution proceeds, men are becoming more and more conscious of the interrelationship of *Kama* and *Manas* (not necessarily so naming it), of the ever-present struggle for supremacy between mind and discordant emotion, the two chief motors of man's inner invisible being.

It would be a major undertaking even to attempt to classify the *siddhis* (psychological faculties) of the inner man. Developed naturally, and in accordance with occult law, they are indispensable aids toward intelligent living, toward truer fulfillment of the plan and purpose of life. When rooted in altruism, faith and love, the *siddhis* are the natural allies of *Higher Manas,* and have justly been called "gods of light and beneficence." But when allowed to fructify in a hotbed of emotionalism, or developed artificially with motives of self-

interest, they become veritable "demons," the insidious enemies of a man's own household. The psychological forces of *Lower* Manas have the power to transform the noblest of human qualities into ugly specters of distrust. Guided by what seems to be some damnable intelligence (the intelligence really of one's own Manas *out of control*), the lower *siddhis* inject into man's consciousness only the dark, shadowy aspects of life and being.

Untold psychic pitfalls line the road that leads to spiritual knowledge. One of the deepest and most frequently encountered of these, the one with which we are chiefly concerned at the present time, is the *guilt-complex,* so called—that subtle, deceptive power of the *Lower Mind* which leads a man to doubt himself. The *guilt-complex,* or self-condemnation, as it may also be termed, certainly possesses the power to drag a man "down to perdition." Why is it that at times we are able to view past errors with equanimity, without being cast down or thrown off balance, while at other times, thinking about the slightest misstep conjures up the specter of self-condemnation and despondency? The emergence of this dark enemy, it is well to note, is cyclic. It wells up almost invariably at some low point of a person's psychological barometer, when *kamic* winds are strongest. Attacking the citadels of noble minds, it paralyzes the Will, thus reducing to impotency the one magic power of rebound. The *guilt-complex* has glued to the spot the feet of more aspiring theosophists, perhaps, than any other defect in the whole range of psychological maladies. Is there any wonder Krishna declared that, "The man of doubtful mind hath no happiness either in this world or in the next or in any other"?

Some individuals, regretful of an unwise course of action, have been known to mull over their mistake for days, to lie awake nights, unable to free their minds from the event. Bound by the chains of *Mara* (the demon of delusion), they continually re-live the experience, somberly rehearsing every dark detail of their unwisdom. Like squirrels in a cage, they are totally unaware that by a single leap *upwards,* by one single high and altruistic thought, they could unfailingly breathe the air of freedom. Mental self-torture of this kind makes of those who indulge, if they only knew it, fit prospects for a future state of *avitchi* (intense mental suffering), the only real hell spoken of, or known, in theosophical literature.

Condemnation of self gives the appearance of penance or humility, and thus deceives the victim into believing it a virtue. Actually, it is

one of the most degrading of psychological afflictions—equally as ignoble as condemnation of others—for both are based upon ignorance. Constant mental repetition of any deed, good or bad, makes an ineffaceable impress upon the tenuous waves of the astral light, whence it is reflected back into the minds of other unsuspecting sensitives, who are then impelled to go and do likewise. Besides being traitor to himself, the man who continually mulls over past shortcomings and mistakes becomes an actual menace to society.

Wm. Q. Judge, one of the few occult psychiatrists of the modern age, gives the following worth-while advice:

> The Past! What is it? Nothing. Gone! Dismiss it. You are the past of yourself. Therefore it concerns you not as such. It only concerns you as you now are. In you, as you exist, lies *all* the past. So follow the Hindu maxim: "Regret nothing; never be sorry; and cut all doubts with the sword of spiritual knowledge." Regret is productive only of error. I care not what I *was*, or what any one *was*. I only look for what I am each moment.

Psychiatrist Krishna was pre-eminently aware of the devastating effects of self-condemnation, of unrestrained feelings of guilt. Many clues and suggestions for both the diagnosis and treatment of this psychological malady may be found in the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

> Even if thou wert the greatest of all sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge. (Chap. IV.)
>
> Even if the man of most evil ways worship me with exclusive devotion, he is to be considered as righteous, for he hath judged aright. (Chap. IX.)

The whole Western world has lived for centuries under the blighting effects of the "original sin" idea. Born and bred in iniquity, man stands condemned, under this doctrine, in the sight of God (and therefore in his own sight), and it is only through an act of grace, through the voluntary sacrifice of someone else, that the ugly blot may be removed. Is it any wonder that men seldom put forth effort to elevate themselves, to rise to the dignity of their own inherent godhood? The *guilt-complex* has been so persistently woven into the fabric of our religious tradition that few are even aware of its psychological implications. Tell a man often enough that he is a "poor miserable sinner," and he will soon come to believe it. Withhold from him the truth of his own innate divinity and you have blocked the one true road to psychological balance and stability. If intelligent men and women nowa-

days turn their energies into outward channels, it is due largely to the *guilt-complex* in them, to the fact that they have been pronounced "sinners" by priests, and thus dissuaded from travelling the inner, free path of spirituality. The result: a mankind seemingly progressed in materiality, but woefully weak in the spiritual and psychological departments of its being.

The Wisdom Religion is fundamentally the philosophy of hope. It proclaims the eternal nature of man, the immortality of soul. It teaches that Manas, the Thinker, is greater than any sin or mistake he has ever committed, or can commit—but that great as is the power to choose one's own course of action, so great is also the responsibility for its use. Theosophy teaches the individual to look up and to aspire, to assume each day a fresh, positive position of uprightness and dignity. If sins there have been—forget them, and as the compassionate Jesus wisely said: "Go, and sin no more." Mistakes, if seen for what they are, may well serve as steppingstones to wisdom, to greater power and usefulness to all mankind.

Eschew, then, all doubt, self-condemnation, and despondency. They are ill-becoming to one endowed with the pure, living fire of *Manas.* The distinguishing mark of the Mind-born Son is his acceptance of full responsibility for the past, and also for all future thoughts and deeds, be they wise or unwise. The true *Manasa* never looks back nor regrets, but finds unbounded courage in the conviction that within his grasp, as within the grasp of every self-conscious Thinker, is the invincible Shield of Victory—the WILL—the Soul's own power of redemption!

> Within yourselves deliverance must be sought;
> Each man his prison makes

In the manifest picture of neuroses guilt feelings seem to play a paramount role. In some neuroses these feelings are expressed openly and abundantly; in others they are more disguised but their presence is suggested by behavior, attitudes and ways of thinking and reacting. . . . To understand the cultural influences which determine our attitude toward guilt feelings we have to consider the influence of Christian conceptions on questions of morals.

—KAREN HORNEY

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—AND ANSWER

FREEDOM for the individual is considered very important, yet does one really have freedom until one has learned the meaning of discipline and control? Does one encourage unrestricted freedom first and then work for discipline?

(*a*) A free man has not only learned the meaning of discipline and control, but he uses discipline and control to be really free; whereas a man who is not free is a slave of anything he cannot control in an almost "natural" way.

So, in dealing with young people, if we can help them to develop discipline and control, it is actually helping them, in the long run, to gain freedom—that is, freedom from being controlled by their emotions and desires. However this is not easy; the difficulty lies in discriminating *when* a child has to "be disciplined" or brought under control, and when and where it should have unrestricted freedom.

These two extremes—unrestricted freedom and hard discipline—can be illustrated by the youth of America and the youth of Europe. In general, European children are raised very strictly and severely disciplined in school, and have to work so hard that very often an atmosphere of fear prevails in the classroom. When the time comes for an adolescent to make his own decisions, he has to learn many things in order to be able to stand on his own feet. Of course, in many cases where the child can keep his own "equilibrium," he grows up to be very successful in life, and may even feel that this is due to his hard training in childhood. The problem of America's youth is reversed. There, children don't have enough to keep them busy, so they sometimes use up their excess energy in a destructive way, and the problem of juvenile delinquency arises. This, of course, is a generalized illustration, but it shows what the results are when either freedom or discipline are carried too far.

One can't encourage freedom first and then discipline, or the other way around. A child should have both at the proper time, from the beginning on. Every child can be given complete freedom at *some* of the times when he is forced by circumstances to make his own decisions. That way he learns to *use* freedom. Then, in another situation, the child has to be disciplined until he learns to protect himself. In

this way the child will notice that different kinds of situations call for either freedom or control.

(*b*) It is a well-known fact that a young child, and even an adolescent, craves a certain amount of discipline and control. If his parents are too lenient, giving him too much freedom, the child feels somewhat lost, because he has not reached the stage of maturity yet, and needs guidance. In order to gain a feeling of complete freedom, he has to learn the meaning of discipline and control.

A disciplined person *seems* to be limited in his amount of freedom, because restraint can be looked at as a barrier to freedom. But without restraint, desires and wishes keep piling up, and, since it is impossible to fulfill all desires, complete freedom is unattainable. Due to the fact that the most attention is given to fulfilling desires, consideration for other people can easily be overlooked. Everybody else who is to be considered is somewhat of an obstacle. Therefore, the "freedom-seeking" person tries to pull away from everybody; as a result, he becomes very lonely, and being lonely cancels the feeling of being "free." Because, what can he *do* with his freedom? Actually, a person can never be completely free, if that means having very little or no responsibility. However, one can obtain a *mental* freedom.

One important factor should not be overlooked. As long as a parent does not have control over his own feelings and desires, it is practically impossible for him to teach a child the meaning of control, because a child observes immediately if the parent himself does not act as he preaches.

(*c*) "Freedom" has two meanings. Orthodox religion tends to take away the innate sense of freedom of the individual—the sense that he is secure *in himself,* that he *could* have life at his command, so to speak, instead of being at the mercy of entanglements he creates in his weaker moments. He needs to feel that he can come out on top. *This* sort of sense of freedom leads towards self-discipline.

Everyone has experienced in some field or other the great joy and sense of accomplishment when, after struggling and trying for a long time, he is able to make a success of his efforts. Thus there is a sense of freedom in one limited area, at least, which comes after a period of discipline and control. Those whom we call "Great Teachers" must have a sense of *complete* freedom, for they have undergone all of the controls and disciplines available to man at this stage of development.

But we may experience, to a degree, the same sort of freedom—partly by accomplishment and partly by attitude. With children, discipline and freedom must go hand in hand. For the child must gain, in the beginning, an idea that there is a freedom of *inquiry* that is important and necessary for true understanding and comprehension, yet, until other parts of his nature have experience and discipline and control, the mind cannot have full play in its freedom. And, too, there are many times when the mind needs control lest it lead us way off into unimportant entanglements. If there is an understanding of what a being is, what are the higher elements to be reached in a person, an understanding of the dual nature of man, then courageous freedom will lead *towards* the right kind of discipline.

There are a number of rules and "already-decided" disciplines that we are faced with, and it is commonly assumed, if one orders his nature along these already-laid-down lines, that he is leading a disciplined life. He is, too, in a way; but perhaps one way that one could get discipline and freedom together would be for him to make his own laws, applying just to himself. Suppose he has come across a book that he knows is beneficial and something from which he could learn a great deal. If he proposed that he read in it, say ten minutes a day, and did this regularly, he would have *chosen* the discipline that he was following, one that he knew would do him a great deal of good, and was at the same time establishing this pattern of "living the higher life"—striving after that which is other than physical attainment or the gratification of the senses.

When children are very young they sometimes play games of setting up "laws" that they themselves are not supposed to break. And then often, in the teen-age group, you will find those who put tremendous effort into some line of effort, perhaps some physical endeavor, such as boys' athletics, or it may be some scholastic goal—or perhaps even some moral ideal one wants to try to follow. This age group has a lot of energy to throw into such attempts and this inclination could be made into something more than an experiment that will run its course and cease, if it could become an integral part of a person, so that he will constantly seek little disciplines or rules for himself to follow, with a concept of "freedom" coming *afterward,* further progress along this line is encouraged by the momentum gained. At the same time one can enjoy much more acutely his freedoms and relaxations.

EPIC OF THE HUMAN SOUL

THE *Bhagavad-Gita* story of a great war, symbolizing the battle that rages within each man between higher and lower mind, is never completely written or told. Being the epic of the human soul, it is the mother of classical literature. The *Gita* story is the inspiration of great poets and playwrights, the matrix within which is cast the framework of every known drama and tragedy—even of every comedy—from the time of Aeschylus and Sophocles down to Shakespeare and the moderns. The *Bhagavad-Gita,* from this point of view, is something more than "a book" which relates the lives and doings of bygone heroes and demigods: it is the personal experience of every human being who aspires. Enacted upon the battleground of circumstance and environment, it is a conflict of giants—the moral, mental, and psychological giants within us. The story, therefore, is ever fresh and inspiring.

The keen observer of life and its wide range of expressions, such as a playwright of the stature of Shakespeare, need not look far for the characters and human motivations he wishes to portray. There is a Hamlet, a Macbeth, and a King Lear within the precincts of our own household—yes, within the heart of every human being. Claudius, Polonius, and all the rest are there, playing the parts of their predecessors, taking the same roles, expressing the same sentiments and emotions that have moved men to action since the beginning of time. Every human being is a compound of both the divine and the satanic qualities existing throughout nature. Each possesses within his personality the germ of every attribute belonging to the human race. At one time, he plays the part of Desdemona—pure, trusting and divine; at others, of Othello, who, blinded by distrust, is moved to commit the most inhuman of deeds. Inspired by doubts and suspicions breathed into his ear by the demoniacal Iago, Othello became victim of the lower *manasic* monster of selfishness and ingratitude within.

The basic metaphysical qualities and attributes of which a human being is composed are few in number. The fundamental virtues and vices of men have their root in, and grow out of, the *three* qualities of Great Nature. Impersonal in themselves, they are the metaphysical ingredients, so to say, of which the multifarious characters of men are compounded. It is these impersonal qualities and attributes, these building-blocks of character, that men like or dislike in each other—

not the forms of personalities in which they are embodied. When one human being holds another in high esteem, for example, it is the qualities displayed by that person that are the object of his respect. When one hates another, as we say, it is only because he recognizes, or thinks he recognizes, attributes and characteristics which are in themselves despicable.

The predominating characteristics of one human being may be those of courage and fearlessness; of another, hypocrisy, ambition, and greed; while a third shows forth the noble attribute of compassion. But the characteristics of men change, however slowly the change may appear to be. They are in a constant state of flux, so that the present man of greed may become one of altruism and sacrifice. Today's coward, through trial, sorrow, and discipline, may turn out to be tomorrow's hero. How, then, can one human being set himself up as judge of another? Wise evaluation is always impersonal, and concerns the *natures* and *characteristics* expressed by men—not the men (souls) themselves, who are temporarily caught up in these *qualities.*

During the cycle of Kali-Yuga, the Dark Age, the predominant characteristics of the human heart, unfortunately, are those pertaining to darkness, or the lower mind. It is as though a great pall of darkness hangs over the whole human race. The most loathsome, perhaps, of all the ingredients of which the human personality is composed, are those of doubt, suspicion, distrust. "At the gate where suspicion enters," says an old proverb, "love goes out." "Suspicion is the poison of friendship," says another. Some individuals, quite unconsciously to themselves, live in a perpetual state of fear and suspicion. For fear of being betrayed, a man will oftentimes refrain from actions which he knows to be noble and upright. Why do we so often suspect others of taking advantage of us? How is it that we so easily fall into the same dark attitudes of mind that we intensely despise in others?

The forerunners of the coming sixth race of humanity are challenged to improve the tenor of the Age. Those who are incarnating for the distinct purpose of changing the *Buddhi-Manas* of the race are called upon to demonstrate the power of a spiritual position assumed, to prove that trust, love, and respect are not weaknesses or folly, but are scientific and dynamic. Few individuals will betray wholehearted trust, and even if they do, who is to blame—those who trust, or those who betray? More often than not, trust arouses the best in a person, and thus enables him to expand and develop inner capacities to the utmost. He will be

moved by the power of conscience to rise to whatever is expected of him. What is true of individual relationships is likewise true of nations. Trust reaches into and takes hold of the Reincarnating Ego.

Some may argue that while this is true in theory, we cannot afford to close our eyes to reality, that some people simply cannot be trusted. It is not suggested here that we assume a namby-pamby position of acceptance of the thousand-and-one foolish things that men *do,* but rather that we learn to make a distinction between *the man* and *the thing done,* between the actor and the act. Trust in *men* (souls) does not imply trust in the perversity of men. Acceptance of the *law* does not imply acceptance of any and every form of action that is out of harmony with the law. If this seems a line too fine to be discovered by our modern minds, then we can only do the best we can. But it might help to consider the following ideas.

It is the teaching of Theosophy that every human being is a soul, capable of soul conduct, and that the impartial law of karma brings to each the just rewards of his actions. The man who is always fearful of being cheated by a brother soul, and of not getting his due, utterly abnegates both these Theosophical principles. If an individual's past karma is good, and present action is in accord with the spiritual law of brotherhood, then how is it possible to be cheated? If, on the other hand, past karma is *not* good, can any amount of fear or suspicion save him from being defrauded? Fear or suspicion, in this respect, only puts off the day of reckoning, besides creating a whole host of new complications for the future. Students of esoteric philosophy are thus asked to ponder whether, in the long run, it might not be better, as well as far safer under the Law, to be sometimes betrayed than it is not to trust.

The story is told of the experiences encountered by conquering troops when first they entered one foreign land. Acting on the principle of force, they intended to shoot without hesitation all who in any way impeded their course. But a surprisingly strange thing happened. The resistance of the natives, though intense in thought and feeling, was only of a passive, non-cooperative nature. Refusing to kill in turn, or to yield to an unjust invasion of their rights, they allowed themselves to be murdered by the thousands. The foreigners soon found themselves utterly incapable of further destruction. Conscience would not permit the continued slaughter of men who refused to fight back. Spiritual force, if genuine, is infinitely more powerful than physical force. A spiritual stand taken in the face of perversity may oftentimes

conquer without the use of violence, by awakening the moral nature of the antagonist.

Theosophists look forward to a brighter morrow. They long for happier times, and dream of the glory of an age when trust and respect will be the general theme. How is this condition to be achieved? Who is to effect the change? The better age will come only when there are individuals strong enough and courageous enough to take the position of soul, to express spiritual qualities and attitudes even in the face of perversity. It will come when men and women feel so strongly the justice of this course that they would rather be betrayed than fail to trust. When that day arrives the whisperings of Shakespeare's Iago will no longer find reception in the ready ear of Othello. Desdemona, the Spirit of truth and light, instead of being lost to her lover as the ensouling guide and power of his life, will be united to him for ever and ever.

> LOVE and TRUST are the only weapons that can overcome the REAL enemies against which the true theosophist must fight. (Wm. Q. Judge.)

THE CROWD AND THE HERO

If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society,* he will see the need of these ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we are become timorous, desponding whimperers. We are afraid of truth, afraid of fortune, afraid of death, and afraid of each other. Our age yields no great and perfect persons. We want men and women who shall renovate life and our social state, but we see that most natures are insolvent, cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force and do lean and beg day and night continually. Our housekeeping is mendicant, our arts, our occupations, our marriages, our religion we have not chosen, but society has chosen for us. We are parlor soldiers. We shun the rugged battle of fate, where strength is born.

Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide; him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him because he did not need it.

—EMERSON

TWO ARCHETYPAL SYMBOLS

TWO symbols that remain as bulwarks of ecclesiasticism are the Dragon and the Virgin. The former has been reduced to the status of a snake in the form of a humanized Devil, the latter to a woman apotheosized in the flesh. Yet, as regards occult history, they have not been long so regarded. The sign and myth of the mother and child were known thousands of years before the Christian era. According to Plato, it was at the ray of this *first* mother, one in three, that "God lighted a fire which we now call the sun." The Mother or Virgin is the Pleroma, the universal soul, the vehicle of Light and the receptacle of all forms. It is the great magic agent called by some the astral light, by others the Sidereal Virgin and the Mysterium Magnum; and by the Eastern Occultists Æther, the reflection of Akasha. From its swelling electric bosom spring matter and spirit. Within its beams lie the beginnings of all physical and chemical action, and of all cosmic and spiritual phenomena. It is a Force which vitalizes and disorganizes; it gives life and produces death, and from its primordial point gradually emerged into existence the myriads of worlds, visible and invisible celestial bodies.

The symbol of the Dragon has ever represented Divine Wisdom. It is the "Logos," also the sun; the Dragon and the Serpent were names given to the "Wise Ones," the initiated adepts of olden times. The Dragon, considered now mythical, is "in fact an extinct antediluvian monster." In Babylonian antiquities it is referred to as the "scaly one" and connected on many gems with Tiamat, the sea. "The Dragon of the Sea" is repeatedly mentioned. In Egypt, it is the star of the Dragon (then the North Pole Star), the origin of the connection of almost all the gods with the Dragon. Bel and the Dragon, Apollo and Python, Osiris and Typhon, Sigurd and Fafnir, and finally St. George and the Dragon, are the same. They were all solar gods, and wherever we find the sun there also is the Dragon, the symbol of Wisdom. The Hierophants of Egypt and of Babylon styled themselves "Sons of the Serpent-God" and "Sons of the Dragon." "I am a Serpent, I am a Druid," said the Druid of the Celto-Britannic regions, for the Serpent and the Dragon are both types of Wisdom, Immortality and Rebirth.

In the Hindu Mythology Vasuki, the Great Dragon, pours forth upon Durga from his mouth, a poisonous fluid which overspreads the

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NOTE.—Collated from standard Theosophical works.

ground, but her consort (Siva) caused the earth to open her mouth and swallow it. Thus the mystic drama of the celestial virgin pursued by the dragon seeking to devour her child, was not only depicted in the constellations of heaven, but was represented in the secret worship of the temples. It was the mystery of the god Sol, and inscribed on a black image of Isis. In days of old—of the *divine Dynasties* on Earth—the now dreaded reptile was regarded as the first beam of light that radiated from the abyss of divine Mystery. Various were the forms which it was made to assume, and numerous are the natural symbols adapted to it, as it crossed æons of time; as from Infinite Time itself—Kala—it fell into the space and time evolved out of human speculation. These forms were Cosmic and astronomical, theistic and pantheistic, abstract and concrete. They became in turn the Polar Dragon and the Southern Cross, the Alpha Draconis of the Pyramid, and the Hindu-Buddhist Dragon which ever threatens, yet never swallows the sun during its eclipses.

Cosmically, the Dragon represents the ceaseless creative and destructive force, the sevenfold potency. The Virgin represents the universally reproductive power found in nature. It is a force whose secret powers were thoroughly familiar to the ancient theurgists, but is denied by modern sceptics. The antediluvian children, who perhaps played with it, using it as the boys in Bulwer-Lytton's *Coming Race* use the tremendous "vril"—called it the "Water of Phtah." Their descendants named it the Anima Mundi, the soul of the universe; or the "Milk of the Celestial Virgin," the Magnes and other names. But our modern learned men will neither accept nor recognize it under such appellations; for it pertains to magic, and magic is in their conceptions a disgraceful superstition. Woman stands in early cosmogony in relation to "matter" or the great deep, as the "Virgin of the Sea" who crushes the Dragon under her foot. For one acquainted with these tenets it becomes more than suggestive to learn that with the Catholics the Virgin Mary is not only the accepted patroness of Christian sailors, but also the "Virgin of the Sea." So was Dido the patroness of the Phoenician mariners, and together with Venus and other lunar goddesses—the moon having such a strong influence over the tides—was the "Virgin of the Sea." *Mar,* the Sea, is the root of the name Mary.

From the remotest antiquity the serpent was held by every people in the greatest veneration, as the embodiment of Divine Wisdom, and the symbol of Spirit. Hermes or Thot in Egypt regarded the serpent as

"the most spirit-like of all the reptiles"; and the Gnostic serpent with the seven vowels over the head is but a copy of Ananta, the seven-headed serpent on which rests the god Vishnu. It is mankind which has become the "Serpent of Genesis," and thus causes daily and hourly the Fall and sin of the "Celestial Virgin"—which thus becomes the mother of gods and devils at one and the same time; for she is the ever-loving, beneficent deity to all those who stir her Soul and heart, instead of attracting to themselves her shadowy manifested essence, called by Eliphas Levi "the fatal light" which kills and destroys. The serpent became the type and symbol of evil, and of the Devil, only during the middle ages. The early Christians—besides the Ophite Gnostics—had their dual Logos: the Good and Bad Serpent, the Agathodæmon and the Kakodæmon.

The seven-headed serpent has more than one signification in the arcane teachings. It is the seven-headed Draco, each of whose heads is a star of the Lesser Bear; but it was also, and pre-eminently, the Serpent of Darkness (*i.e.,* inconceivable and incomprehensible) whose seven heads were the seven Logoi, the reflections of the one and first manifested Light—the universal Logos. The septenary Dragon-Logos has been in the course of time split up, so to say, into four heptanomic parts, or twenty-eight portions. Each lunar week has a distinct occult character in the lunar month; each day of the twenty-eight has its special characteristics; and each of the twelve constellations, whether separately or in combination with other signs, has an occult influence either for good or for evil. *This represents the sum of knowledge that men can acquire on earth.* Yet few are those who acquire it, and still fewer are the wise men who get to the root of knowledge symbolized by the great Root Dragon, the spiritual Logos of these visible signs. But those who do, receive the name of "Dragons," and they are the "Arhats of the Four Truths and of the 28 Faculties," or attributes, and have always been so called.

All the dragons and sepents of antiquity are seven-headed, "one head for each race, and every head with seven hairs on it," as the allegory has it. From Ananta, the Serpent of Eternity which carries Vishnu through the Manvantara, from the original primordial Sesha, down to the seven-headed Akkadian Serpent. This typifies the seven principles throughout nature and man; the highest or *middle* head being the seventh. The legends of every nation and tribe, whether civilized or savage, point to the once universal belief in the great wisdom and

cunning of the serpents. They are "charmers." They hypnotize the bird with their eye, and man himself very often does not feel above their fascination influence. The symbol is a most fitting one.

The Ophites asserted that there were several kinds of genii, from god to man; that the relative superiority of these was ruled by the degree of light that was accorded to each; and they maintained that the serpent had to be constantly called upon and to be thanked for the signal service it had rendered to humanity. For it had taught Adam that if he ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he would raise his being immensely by the learning and wisdom he would thus acquire. Such was the exoteric reason given. It is easy to see whence the primal idea of this dual, Janus-like character of the Serpent: the good and the bad. This symbol is one of the most ancient because the reptile preceded the bird, and the bird the mammal.

Thence the belief, or rather the superstition, of the savage tribes who think that the souls of their ancestors live under this form, and the general association of the serpent with the tree. The legends about the various things it represents are numberless; but, as most of them are allegorical, they have now passed into the class of fables based on ignorance and dark superstition. For instance when Philostratus narrates that the natives of India and Arabia fed on the heart and liver of serpents in order to learn the language of all the animals, the serpent being credited with that faculty, he certainly never meant his words to be accepted literally. It was the wisdom and the learning of the "Wise Ones" that were devoured or assimilated by their followers, whence the allegory. When the Scandinavian is fabled to have roasted the heart of Fafnir, the Dragon whom he has slain, becoming thereby the wisest of men, it meant the same thing. Sigurd had become more learned in the runes and magical charms; he had received the "word" from an initiate of that name, or from a sorceror, after which the latter died, as many do, after "passing the word."

Epiphanius lets out the secret of the Gnostics while trying to expose their heresies. The Gnostic Ophites, he says, had a reason for honoring the Serpent: it was because he taught the primeval men the Mysteries. The Alexandrian Neo-Platonists asserted that to become real Chaldees or Magi, one had to master the science of the periods of the Seven Rectors of the world, in whom is all wisdom. The "True and Perfect Serpent" is the seven-lettered God. The *Nagas* of the Hindu and Tibetan adepts are human *Nagas* (Serpents), not reptiles. More-

over, the Serpent has ever been the type of consecutive and serial rejuvenation, of IMMORTALITY and TIME.

According to the notions of the oldest philosophers the earth, serpent-like, casts off its skin and appears after every minor pralaya in a rejuvenated state, and after the great pralaya resurrects and evolves again from its subjective into objective existence. Like the serpent, it not only "puts off its old age," says Sanchoniathon, "but increases in size and strength." This is why not only Serapis, the "Dragon of Wisdom" in Egypt during the first centuries of Christianity, and later, Jesus, was represented by a great serpent, but even why in the nineteenth century big snakes were kept in Moslem mosques. In India in some children's cradles a pair of serpents, male and female, are reared with the infant, and snakes are often kept in houses, as they are thought to bring good luck. They are the progeny of *Sarpa Rajna,* the earth, "Queen of the Serpents," and endowed with all her virtues.

As a symbol, the serpent had as many aspects and occult meanings as the tree itself; the "Tree of Life," with which it was emblematically and almost indissolubly connected. In the beginning of their joint existence as a glyph of Immortal Being, the Tree and Serpent were divine imagery, truly. But whether viewed as a metaphysical or a physical symbol, the tree and serpent, jointly or separately, have never been so degraded by antiquity as they are now, in this our age of the breaking of idols, not for truth's sake, but to glorify the more gross matter. Certain symbologists entirely fail to see that their interpretations of the "Tree of Life," as the cross and phallus, fitted the symbol and approximated it only on the lowest and last stage of the evolutionary development of the idea of the Giver of Life. It was the last and the grossest physical transformation of nature, in animal, insect, bird, and even plant. For biune, creative magnetism, in the form of attraction of the contraries, or sexual polarization, acts in the constitution of the reptile and bird as it does in that of man. Moreover, the modern symbologists and Orientalists—from first to last—being ignorant of the real mysteries revealed by Occultism, can necessarily see but this last stage. If told that this mode of procreation is but a passing phase, a physical means of furnishing the conditions to, and producing the phenomena of life which will alter with this, and disappear with the next Root-race—they would laugh at such a superstitious and unscientific idea. But the most learned Occultists assert this because *they know it.*

But what of the symbol of Isis, the "Celestial Virgin," the Magnes and Akasha, now turned into the Virgin Mary by the Church? Albumazar the Arabian indicates the identity of the several "Mary" myths as follows: "In the first decan of the Virgin rises a maid, called in Arabic Aderenosa (the Hindu Adha-nari?), that is, a pure immaculate virgin, graceful in person, charming in countenance, modest in habit, with loosened hair, holding in her hands two ears of wheat, sitting upon an embroidered throne, nursing a boy, and rightly feeding him in the place called Hebræa; a boy, I say, named Iessus by certain nations, which signifies Issa, whom they also call Christ in Greek." Albertus Magnus, himself an alchemist and student of occult science, as well as a bishop of the Roman Catholic Church, in his enthusiasm for astrology declared that the zodiacal sign of the celestial virgin rises above the horizon on the twenty-fifth of December, at the moment assigned by the Church for the birth of the Saviour.

In Indur Subba, the south entrance of the Caves of Ellora, may be seen to this day the figure of Indra's wife, Indranee, sitting with her infant-god, pointing the finger to heaven with the same gesture as the Italian Madonna and child. In *Pagan and Christian Symbolism,* the author gives a figure from a medieval woodcut—the like of which we have seen by dozens in old psalters—in which the Virgin Mary, with her infant, is represented as the Queen of Heaven, on the crescent moon, emblem of virginity. "Being before the sun, she almost eclipses its light. Than this, nothing could more completely identify the Christian mother and child with Isis and Horus, Ishtar, Venus, Juno, and a host of other Pagan goddesses, who have been called 'Queen of Heaven,' 'Queen of the Universe', 'Mother of God', 'Spouse of God', 'the Celestial Virgin', 'the Heavenly Peace-Maker', etc., etc." Such pictures are not purely astronomical. They represent the male god and the female goddess, as the sun and moon in conjunction, "the union of the triad with the unit." The horns of the cow on the head of Isis have the same significance.

When Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria, had openly embraced the cause of Isis, the Egyptian goddess, and had anthropomorphized her into Mary, the mother of God; and the trinitarian controversy had taken place; from that moment the Egyptian doctrine of emanations of the Creative God out of Emepht (Unknown) had to be tortured in a thousand ways, until the Councils had agreed upon the adoption of it as it

now stands—the disfigured Ternary of the kabalistic Solomon and Philo! But as its origin was yet too evident, the *Word* was no longer called the "Heavenly Man," the *primal* Adam Kadmon, but became the Logos—Christ, and was made as old as the "Ancient of the Ancient," his father. The *concealed* WISDOM became identical with its emanations, the DIVINE THOUGHT, and was made to be regarded co-equal and coeternal with its first manifestations.

The famous Catholic theologian, Tillemont, assures us in his writings that "all the illustrious Pagans are condemned to the eternal torments of hell, because they lived before the time of Jesus, and therefore, could not be benefited by the redemption." This includes foremost of all the Pagans whose allegories most closely resemble those of the Christian Dispensation. He also assures us that the Virgin Mary personally testified to this truth over her own signature in a letter to a saint. . . . There are two precious missives from the Virgin in the archives of the Church. The first purports to be a letter in answer to one addressed to her by Ignatius. She confirms all things learned by her correspondent from "her friend"—meaning the Apostle John. She bids him hold fast to his vows, and adds as an inducement: "I and John will come together to pay you a visit!" (See further, *Isis Unveiled* II, 75, 86, *et seq.*)

The civilized world may yet expect the apparition of the materialized Virgin Mary within the walls of the Vatican. The so often-repeated "miracle" of the Immaculate Visitor in the medieval ages continues to be enacted at Lourdes, and why not once more, as a *coup de grace* to all heretics, schismatics, and infidels?

Such are today's "Mysteries." But the Mysteries of the past, in the history of every ancient nation, were a series of dramatic performances, in which the truths concerning cosmogony and nature in general were personified by the priests and neophytes, who enacted the parts of various gods and goddesses, repeating supposed *scenes* (allegories) *from their respective lives.* These were explained in their hidden meaning to the candidates for initiation, and incorporated into philosophical doctrines. In the past, the name of the *new* initiate was Mystes. It is now that of Roman Catholic Cardinals, who, having borrowed all their other rites and dogmas from Aryan, Egyptian, and Hellenic "heathen," have helped themselves to the "mystery name" of the neophytes. To these latter belonged, too, the archaic dramas of the Dragon and the Virgin.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON FREE WILL

THE question as to whether or not man is a free moral agent, and can exercise free will and choice, has been discussed and argued for centuries. That it could have remained an open question for so long, without some definite and generally accepted conclusion having been reached, would seem to be due to the inability of the participants to first determine what man is. What is his nature? What is the purpose of this life he is living? What is his relationship with all the other beings of such an infinite variety of form and intelligence? It is obvious that without this knowledge, controversy is inevitable.

Most of the discussion has been carried on at a level of consciousness that is applicable only to the purely personal, perishable part of man's nature. "Free will" proponents may cite instances of determined individuals who have overcome unfavorable environmental circumstances to achieve what the world calls success in some chosen line of endeavor, and point to this as evidence, or proof, that man can shape his own destiny.

"Determinists" may call attention to cases of failure due to ill-health or accident, claiming this to be proof that man is a helpless creature of circumstance. Kept at this level, the discussion can last for many more centuries to little avail. Macneile Dixon's *Human Situation* develops the futility of most "free-will" argument excellently, providing a stepping stone in a Theosophic direction. Dixon writes:

> Kant confessed, he could not imagine how his will moved his arm. We are, however, surrounded with miracles. And among them, as I believe, is the fact that everything that comes about, all that happens, is the result of will in some shape or form. And as all human history is simply the edifice erected by the aims and desires of mankind, of the individuals born into the world, so the universe itself has taken its present structure, and will take throughout time to come whatever aspects it may assume, from the wills of its innumerable and constituent beings, at once its creatures and the creators of its history. All the energy, will, intelligence, purpose displayed throughout the universe is the energy, will, intelligence, purpose of real individual beings of which in its entirety it consists.
>
> I would ask you to observe that this conclusion does not deny the principle of causation, that events have their causes. It does not abandon nature to the rule of chance, or random happenings. It assigns events to the activity of individual entities, to their unpredictable im-

pulses. In their desiring or willing you must seek the causes of these events. Limited in power as individuals indeed they are, as are we ourselves, to make their wills effective in a world of multiform purposes and designs; yet ultimately it is to will that all events in the universe must be assigned.

What bearing has all this upon the problem of human freedom, so hotly debated from century to century by churchmen and philosophers alike? The onus of proof lies with the determinists. And one may, perhaps, be allowed the hope that we have heard the last of this tiresome and unprofitable controversy, this spider's web of dialectic, and are permitted a return to common sense.

The viewpoint furnished by the philosophy of Theosophy, however, with respect to man's nature, origin, and destiny, enormously extends the boundaries of this field of inquiry. This philosophy offers for consideration the idea that man is a complex seven-fold being, and suggests that the problem of free will can never be solved by reasoning from *one* plane of substance—or from a one-life basis. But in which of these seven constituents does the power to direct "will" reside? To what part of man does it belong?

According to H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine,* the upper triad of this group of seven is imperishable, whereas the lower four last but one lifetime and are continually changing even during that short period. Since there is an enormous responsibility involved in the exercise of free will, it would seem unreasonable to assume that so important a power should be directed by the perishable part of man's nature. It seems much more logical to think that it ought to be directed by the real and permanent part of man—the part that uses the lower aspects of itself as instruments through which to acquire experience during incarnation.

Exercising free will under the direction of this higher part of man's nature would not mean just doing anything one pleased, regardless of consequences, as may a five-year-old child. Plotinus, the Neo-Platonist, said: "We will ascribe free will only to him whose actions are determined by intelligence." This would seem to imply that the activities of a free will guided by true intelligence would be kept within the bounds of ethical responsibility.

Any game with more than one player must have rules. A man would be very unreasonable to think himself deprived of the right to use his "free" will because he is not allowed to drive his car up the wrong side of the street "against traffic," or because he has to wait for the

light to change. As a matter of obvious fact, traffic ordinances are at least partially successful attempts to give every driver the right to drive over the streets of the city with as little delay and as much safety as possible. The "rules" call for give and take—on the basis of understanding of the laws. A man waits for cross-traffic. The light changes and cross-traffic waits for him. If he thinks it reasonable that others should have the same rights that he wants for himself, and voluntarily complies with the laws, he is exercising free will—under the terms laid down by Plotinus: his actions are determined by intelligence.

Perhaps it is necessary that behavior animated by the lower self is restrained and limited by human law. Apparently, man still has enough leeway in choice, even at this level, to get into a lot of trouble by acting from a separative basis—thus bringing him face to face with the lessons that life has for him at this stage of development; for one thing, he learns that the rest of mankind will react against an extremely selfish man.

Although in the minority, there are men and women in the world, who, of their own free will, try to comply with Nature's universal laws, and who avoid as much as possible disturbing the equilibrium of evolutionary potential. The Buddhas and Christs are extreme cases who *choose* to devote an entire life to the service of mankind.

WILL AND ENERGY

No man, however gross and material he may be, can avoid leading a double existence; one in the visible universe, the other in the invisible; and while the more animal portions of him rest, the more spiritual ones know neither limits nor obstacles. During its brief sojourn on earth our soul may be assimilated to a light hidden under a bushel, it still shines more or less bright and attracts to itself the influences of kindred spirits; and when a thought of good or evil import is begotten in our brain, it draws to it impulses of like nature as irresistibly as the magnet attracts iron filings. This attraction is also proportionate to the intensity with which the thought-impulse makes itself felt in the ether; and so it will be understood how one man may impress himself upon his own epoch so forcibly, that the influence may be carried—through the ever-interchanging currents of energy between the two worlds, the visible and the invisible—from one succeeding age to another, until it affects a large portion of mankind. —H. P. BLAVATSKY

ON THE LOOKOUT

Religion—A Kaleidoscopic View

That religion still makes news is shown by various items appearing in current newspapers and magazines. Since every sort of opinion is represented—from the extreme orthodox to the most liberal—it appears that "fragmentation" of orthodoxy, if carried far enough, may be the means of fulfilling H.P.B.'s prophecy regarding orthodoxy's total demise.

Controversy over teaching "Basic Religion" in the public schools continues. Lookout for March noted the spiritual and moral "Guide" proposed for use in the schools, but judging from the New York *World-Telegram* (Jan. 6), the subject warrants more detailed treatment. As this paper states:

> Public schools can and should teach "ethical behavior based on a sense of moral and spiritual values." This was one of the school goals unanimously approved by the 2000 delegates to the White House Conference on Education. . . . The big question, which the White House conference largely side-stepped and which is at the crux of the developing controversy, is whether schools can effectively teach "moral and spiritual values" without reference to the religious beliefs which underlie and sanction these values for most Americans.

Reactions of Church Councils

As might be expected, the Catholic dignitaries are solidly behind the proposal to use the "guide" in public schools. (Indeed, the movement seems to have been Catholic-instigated.) The Jewish rabbis are just as solidly against the proposal, for "if faith in God is to be inculcated in the schools in such a manner as to do no violence to the beliefs of Catholic, Protestant and Jew, it will be so pallid and anemic as to be meaningless." As for the Protestants:

> The general board of the National Council of Churches, representing 30 leading Protestant and Orthodox denominations, adopted a resolution asserting that public schools should "teach that religion is an essential aspect of our national heritage and culture, that this nation subsists under the governance of God, and that our moral and ethical values rest upon religious grounds and sanctions."

DEFINITE OPINIONS VITAL

The *World-Telegram* asks a significant question:

> Can a tax-supported school offer objective instruction about religion without getting involved in sectarian controversy and without violating the constitutional separation of church and state?
>
> If you haven't decided where you stand on these questions, this might be a good time to start thinking about them. A controversy over the place of religion in the public schools, which has been simmering for several years, seems likely to boil over in 1956 into a nation-wide debate that could have tremendous consequences for the education of American youth.

POT OR KETTLE BLACK?

As usual, representatives of each major denomination point to what they consider flaws in the contrasting doctrines. *Newsweek,* Feb. 13, for example, quotes the Rev. Charles C. Morrison, founder and president of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State: "Roman Catholics hold an entirely different conception of the church-state principle from that which is embodied in the First Amendment . . . The Catholic hierarchy has a conscious purpose to break down the principle of separation whenever it can."

And from the unofficial Vatican City magazine, *Osservatore Della Domenica,* the Los Angeles *Times,* Feb. 5, quotes the following:

> Protestantism is more and more losing its religious character. . . . The average Protestants are people who look on Sunday for a little amusement or prayer, who believe both in God and the usefulness of all doctrinal and ritual questions, who choose their churches on the basis of the personality of the pastor, the politeness of the usher, and ease of parking the car.
>
> Characteristic of the American Protestant today is his constant migration from one church to another. He is no longer attached to the denomination he belongs to.

RELIGIOUS INTEREST ON CAMPUSES

Although college students show an increasing interest in religion, theirs is an intellectual approach, rather than an emotional resurgence. A New York *Times* columnist (Oct. 24, 1955) observes:

> On college campuses, there is not so much a religious revival as a religious search. The new concern for religion by some students has been characterized as a "basic re-examination of our popular assumptions." Manifestations of this concern range from increased

religious activities and study to search for religious beliefs that is sometimes combined with hostility toward the church.

Basic Student Concern

Although in rare instances, the *Times* states, a few university officials suggested that some of the students who professed interest in religion were "jumping on the bandwagon," this idea was sharply countered by other officials. Students in general do not seem to react favorably to Dr. Norman Peale's approach, feeling that he "distorts Christianity" in his attempt to "sell" it: they are not looking, they say, for "pie in the penthouse" nor for a "religious Dorothy Dix." The *Times* account sums up the undergraduate point of view:

> Talks with educators, religious leaders and students leave the impression that undergraduates feel sharply that man with all his social and physical sciences has produced two world wars and the hydrogen bomb in less than fifty years. They feel that for all the discoveries and benefits of medical science, mankind is in a far more perilous position now than before. . . . Conversations with students do not bring out a desire to forego scientific achievement or live in the past. Nor do such conversations indicate, as a few educators said, that student concern for religion is a flight from reason.
>
> Rather, students are often applying to religion and religious teachings the vigorous searching and intellectual approach found in other disciplines such as the sciences. Christianity and the teachings of the Judeo-Christian tradition, which claim to hold man's salvation, are now being searchingly investigated by students.

Important Trend in Religious Life

Max Lerner (New York *Post,* Nov. 1, 1955), writing from a wider viewpoint, examines events which may "mark a new and important trend in American religious life": the dedication of three student chapels [Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish] at Brandeis University; and the publication of *Protestant-Catholic-Jew,* by Will Herberg. Had Brandeis followed the traditional university custom, the chapel would have been Jewish. Instead, as Mr. Lerner says:

> It chose to give three religious faiths its own uniqueness, on the theory that they must respect each other but are not interchangeable. Last week Brandeis held a ceremony at which the three chapels were opened, and honorary degrees were awarded to Justice Harlan, and to Protestant theologian Paul Tillich, Catholic theologian Jacques Maritain, and Rabbi Leo Baeckh.

In doing this, Brandeis has expressed one of the deep impulses of American cultural development toward a three-religion country. While the American tradition is Protestant, and while the large majority of the people are Protestant, the U.S. is no longer a Protestant country. A recent church conference has pointed out that the Protestants are no longer dominant in the big cities, and are moving toward the suburbs, leaving the cities Catholic and Jewish. In a dramatic way this is true of New York; in a lesser way it is true of other cities. In a city like Boston the vanishing Protestant is, alas, somewhat in a category with the vanishing Indian and the bison. I say "alas" because I regard the Protestant tradition, with its passion for dissent, as a great one.

"RETURN TO RELIGION" QUESTIONED

Under this heading, Arthur Mann reviews (in the January *Progressive*) Will Herberg's *Protestant-Catholic-Jew—An Essay in American Religious Sociology.* He observes:

One of the curious paradoxes of our day is a religious revival coexisting with a continuing secularism. More and more people are joining churches and owning Bibles, but the popular gospel is the health and wealth gospel of Norman Vincent Peale. . . . Is the revival in religion phony?

Mr. Mann bases this question on the ignorance shown by "believers" in a recent poll regarding the synoptic gospels. Further, "when thirty well-known Americans were asked to list the one hundred decisive events in history, they place Bethlehem fourteenth—in a tie with Kitty Hawk." Mr. Mann then continues:

Protestant-Catholic-Jew argues that it is nothing of the sort. Herberg admits that "other directed" Americans join churches because it is the thing to do. But more important is the need for security in an insecure and idolatrous age. The false gods of science and progress and politics and economics are dead, for the "secular faiths of our culture have igominiously collapsed under the shattering impact of the events of our time."

Herberg dedicates his book to third-generation Americans, whose return to religion accounts for the present revival. . . . For America is not a single melting pot; it is a "triple melting pot" of the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish communities. Herberg describes how each of the major denominations evolved from a variety of ethnic churches, and incorporated the American Way of Life. To be an American one must be a Protestant, a Catholic, or a Jew; not to be one of these is to be a nothing. But be one Jew or Catholic or Protestant, one believes in the same values. American religion, stressing morality over piety, is

activist and humanitarian. It is the handmaiden of American democracy.

The theology is Neo-Orthodoxy. Herberg rejoices in the return to religion, but he demands a religion that will recapture the "Jewish-Christian faith" in which man trembles before God, where piety is more pronounced than morality.

Area of Disagreement

The Theosophist, who may not believe himself to be "a nothing" merely because he does not belong to any of the major religious groups, will clearly oppose "Big Three" institutionalism as being but another psychological version of theocracy. The *number* of accepted orthodoxies is relatively unimportant, for, were three hundred denominations listed as qualifying to be "American"—and Theosophists named among them—the principle of individual conscience would still be subverted.

The February *Humanist World Digest* takes up another aspect of needed criticism of Herberg's thesis, pointing out that brave men need not "tremble before God":

> Religious humanism is for that brave and venturesome soul who would embark upon the sea of modern knowledge to find the truth. It is for the critically-minded man or woman who has seen through the subterfuge of orthodoxy and is not afraid to admit the extent of human ignorance regarding the origin and future of life.
>
> The religion we need is a natural religion which recognizes that man is part of nature and that God or ultimate reality is too vast to be described simply. . . . There is no place for dogmatism in religion or in science. That aspect of humanism which I term "religious humanism" or "natural religion" is a common ground and to it are welcomed all who seek the truth.

A Spectacular Fragment

As we turn the kaleidoscope of religious news, a brilliant bit comes into focus—out of place, it seems, in a "picture" of religions! It is, says the Los Angeles *Times* (Jan. 26), "a picture of an explosively expanding church . . . drawn by Dr. Paul S. Wright, moderator of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A." According to the *Times,* "Dr. Wright painted a glowing picture of prospects for his communion . . . and predicted a $30,000,000 benevolence budget within the foreseeable future, adding":

> Don't let that figure scare you. When we attain it, Presbyterians will still be able to purchase their share of color television sets, fine autos and they will mention the word "sacrifice" once in a while but not many will know what it really means.

Religion Made Painless

This prospectus certainly provides ground for some of the comments made by the Vatican City magazine, for the appeal seems to be aimed at the social and convivial, as distinguished from the religious side of life. The *Times* further quotes Dr. Wright:

> Duplicate morning programs are conducted at most churches these days, and the coffee break between them has virtually become a part of divine order of worship.
>
> People are filling their churches these Sundays, and they are hearing better music, better programming, than ever before. More money is being contributed and staffs are expanding and specialization is in order.

Same Denomination, Different Emphasis

The high-pressure advertising of Dr. Wright finds sober contrast in a news item from the Los Angeles *Examiner* (Feb. 25):

"Professor Trueblood, professor of religious philosophy, told some 1500 delegates to the third Western area meeting of the National Council of Presbyterian men [San Francisco] that the term 'layman' is outmoded and condescending. The old division of the entire Christian community into two classes, the clergy and the lay people, is no longer valid." Prof. Trueblood specified:

> Now a group is emerging who are as far different from the old-fashioned layman as they are from the clergyman. The fact that they are not ordained does not keep them from a thorough commitment and full participation in the promotion of the Christian cause.
>
> I suggest that the word "yokefellow," appearing in Phillipians 4:3, is an excellent one because it signifies its meaning at once to all.

Society or Army at Fault

Not all ministers of the gospel, however, identify increase of membership with religious zeal, or with genuine *religious* revival. The Cincinnati *Post* recently cited a *Christian Century* article by George Birney, Army chaplain, who concludes from his experience with GIs that "church membership has become too easy." Mr. Birney feels that civilian life, not the army, is responsible for the state of morals in

the Armed Forces: "everybody's doing it" seems a valid reason to the GI, he says. The *Post* continues its resumé:

> This forces an honest minister of the Gospel to admit that churches are failing to instill into youth the moral standards of our Christian faith. . . . We'll either have to change our Christian codes to fit current practices, or change the practices to fit the codes. There is no other honest way of doing it. I am one who believes church people already have abandoned most of those codes. When they are ignored in daily life, they become meaningless. . . . Without love of God and neighbor, great sorrows are brought into the lives of others.
>
> Surely we are dishonest with ourselves and with God when we uphold virtues we do not even try to practice. The truth is that many men and women who attend church do not believe in the creeds of their denominations.

The Real Cause of Failure

Yet the *failure* to instill moral standards in youth is not of recent date. In 1887, H.P.B. printed in *Lucifer* an open letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, which said:

> The churches have never taught men any other or higher reason why they should be just and kind and true than the hope of reward and the fear of punishment, and when they let go their belief in Divine caprice and Divine injustice, the foundations of their morality are sapped. They have not even natural morality to consciously fall back upon, Christianity has taught them to regard it as worthless on account of the natural depravity of man. Therefore, self-interest becomes the only motive for conduct, and the fear of being found out, the only deterrent from vice. And so, with regard to morality as well as to God and the soul, Christianity pushes men off the path that leads to knowledge, and precipitates them into the abyss of incredulity, pessimism and vice.

A Higher Form of Prayer

"Prayer has several other meanings besides that given it by the Christians," wrote H. P. Blavatsky. "It means not only a pleading or *petition,* but meant, in days of old, far more an invocation and incantation." Henry Frank's column in the Feb. 17 *Mirror-News* (Los Angeles) makes us wonder if perhaps *many* people are not "ready" to renounce prayer as pleading, and to worship by invocation. What he says shows, we think, at least a willingness to *supplement* the servility of pleading by the dignity of invocation. Mr. Frank writes of Indian "prayer" as superior to that of many Christians:

"Men have prayed, probably, since they first attained reason. Prayers have varied from informal mutterings to public utterances delivered in pear-shaped tones. Men, too, have written poetry for ages, but somehow the most polished attainments in both fields suffer a little when compared to the prayer of Yellow Lark, a Sioux Indian chief. His prayer is being used today in 20,000 American churches, and in others in 134 foreign nations, to mark the World Day of Prayer. . . . This was an untutored Savage?"

> O great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds, and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me.
>
> I come before you, one of your many children. I am small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom.
>
> Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes behold the purple and red sunset. Make my hands respect the things you have made, my ears sharp to hear your voice.
>
> Make me wise so that I may know the things you have taught my people, the lesson you have hidden in every leaf and rock.
>
> I seek strength, not to be superior to my brothers, but to be able to fight my greatest enemy—myself.
>
> Make me ever ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes, so that when life fades as a fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.

BUDDHIST COMPARISON

The philosophical and psychological superiority of Eastern "primitive" religion over Western, so often pointed out by H.P.B., is plainly evident in the following description of Buddhist faith, appearing in a leaflet prepared by N. M. Thero, of Ceylon:

> The follower of the Buddha is again and again reminded that he has to rely on himself and his own exertions, and that there is nobody, either in heaven or on earth, who can help him and free him from the results of his former evil deeds. "By oneself evil is done, by oneself one becomes pure. Purity and impurity spring from oneself. No one else can be one's saviour." Buddhism teaches that every one is responsible for his own good and bad deeds, and that only he himself can mould his own destiny. "These evil deeds were only done by you, not by your parents, friends or advisers, and you yourself will reap the painful results."

DON'T FOLLOW MERE HEARSAY

> A further wholesome factor in developing in a people the feeling of self-reliance and self-confidence is presented by the Buddha's

announcement that no one is expected to believe anything on mere tradition and authority, but that anyone who wishes to reach perfection and mental emancipation, has to rely on his own understanding and thinking powers, uninfluenced by dogma and blind belief. The Buddha said: "Do not go according to mere hearsay or traditions . . . do not believe in a thing merely because your master told it. But if you yourself understand that such and such things are evil and bad, and lead you and others to misfortune, then you may reject these things."

A doctrine like this, which makes an appeal to man's own understanding, must indeed have a beneficial influence on a people, whereas one that demands blind faith in authority, scriptures, ceremonies and traditions, and does not admit personal investigation, must necessarily lead a people to spiritual lethargy. Spiritual progress is possible only where there is freedom of thought. Where, however, blind belief in authority prevails, there will be no mental progress. Freedom of thinking leads to mental vigour and progress, while dogmatism leads to stagnation.

Prophetic Dream Again Makes Headlines

Lookout for August, 1951, commented at some length on a prophetic dream and its subsequent unfolding in events, related in the *Saturday Evening Post* by Air Marshall Sir Victor Goddard. An English film version of this story, *The Night My Number Came Up,* is now being shown in New York, according to the New York *Herald Tribune,* Dec. 20. The reviewer notes:

> This is not a new situation—a random group of people thrown together facing death. Men react in different ways to danger, and it always makes interesting drama.
>
> But the special fascination of this film is its heavy sense of premonition, the feeling that the flight is going according to a plan pre-arranged by fate.
>
> The passengers are educated people who scoff at the supernatural. And yet they know that psychic dreams do happen, and as this particular dream fills out like a jigsaw puzzle, their deep human fears push reason aside.
>
> It does no good to tell themselves that it's silly to be afraid—supernatural fears are hard to argue away.

Phenomenalism or Philosophy?

Should this film stir even a few viewers to search for an explanation of prophetic dreams, it will have served a useful purpose, for the rationale of prophetic dreams can be understood only in conjunction with the teaching of the sevenfold man; they can be understood only

within the framework of man's total consciousness. As H.P.B. says in the section on "Dreams" in *Transactions*:

> Prophetic dreams are impressed on our memory by the Higher Self, and are generally plain and clear: either a voice heard or the coming event foreseen.
>
> It may be said, in the case of persons who have truly prophetic dreams, that it is because their physical brains and memory are in closer relation and sympathy with their "Higher Ego" than in the generality of men. The Ego-Self has more facilities for impressing upon the physical shell and memory that which is of importance to such persons than it has in the case of other less gifted persons. Remember that the only God man comes in contact with is his own God, called Spirit, Soul and Mind, or Consciousness, and these three are one.
>
> There is no simple answer to the question "What is it that dreams?" for it depends entirely on each individual what principle will be the chief motor in dreams, and whether they will be remembered or forgotten.

CONSERVATISM PAYS OFF

Profiting from the original Salk fiasco in the United States, Britain has instituted its own careful examination and testing of the vaccine before offering it to the public for mass inoculation. The Manchester *Guardian* of Jan. 26 reports that "the Ministry of Health has decided that a vaccine of the Salk type will be available for use in this country next summer," but adds this comment:

> Viruses are much more difficult to combat than bacteria, and poliomyelitis itself has its own peculiar difficulties. Only a small proportion of those who are infected with the virus—probably fewer than ten in a thousand—become clinically sick. But among these the mortality is high. This means that many of the children who are vaccinated next summer might never have become ill even if they were exposed to the most virulent source of infection. This is why it is bound to be expensive to carry out any vaccination programme, and why it will be difficult to assess its efficacy.

It seems clear that the British do not have the complete faith in inoculations (any and every inoculation!) that the more ebullient Americans have, for the *Guardian* goes on to say:

> There is good reason to believe that the contacts of infected people are not kept in quarantine as rigorously as they should be, and sometimes schools which should be kept closed are opened during the height of a local epidemic. Perhaps the possession of a new weapon against the disease will encourage local authorities to tighten up their procedure in these circumstances.